

Chapter 1: Nationalism, the English Question and Sport

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Introduction

The significance of the relationship between sport and national character has been recognised by the English for a long-time. Perhaps one of the earliest examples is the English artist and writer Joseph Strutt who wrote *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* first published in 1801. Strutt (1903: xv) argued that in order to form ‘a just estimation of the character of any particular people, it is absolutely necessary to investigate the Sports and Pastimes most generally prevalent among them.’ Two hundred years later sport continues to be seen as one of the most important spheres in which English national distinctiveness can be observed. Carrington (1999:73) argued that,

[given the] decreasing centrality to public life of two of the key institutions that have traditionally helped foster a sense of national belonging—war and the Royal family—sport...has increasingly occupied a central role in symbolising English nationalism.

This viewpoint is a central theme that runs throughout *Sport and English National Identity in a ‘Disunited Kingdom’*. The various chapters have been selected to illustrate how current debates regarding Englishness are manifest in sport in diverse, and at times contradictory, ways.

This volume is timely because this particular form of nationalism has become increasingly contested in recent years. Of course, Englishness has long been referred to as “an identity in crisis”. At the turn of the century Colls (2002: 6) argued that, “‘England’ is always up for debate, of course, but in recent years the debate has become critical The English stand now in need of a reassessment of who they are.’ But the 2014 Scottish devolution referendum (which took place just before this project began) and the UK-wide referendum on EU membership (the result of which was released as this manuscript came to completion) have brought these issues of national identity and belonging to a head in new and complex ways.

Conceptually we regard sport as a microcosm through which to observe the current “problems”, or what Aughey (2007) refers to as “anxieties”, surrounding English national identity. Fundamentally structuring these anxieties is the lack of a clearly defined political identity that distinguishes English from British (Colley 1996; Kumar 2000; 2001; 2003; 2006a; 2006b; McCrone 2002; 2006). The rise in the appearance of the St George’s Cross in relation to English sport has been regarded as evidence of a renewed desire on the part of the English to establish a distinct cultural identity similar to that of the Scottish and Welsh (Carrington 1999; Gibbons 2014; Perryman 2006; Robinson 2008; Weight 2000), yet in many other ways, for instance in the global spectacle of the Olympic Games (Gibbons et al, 2015), sport continues to reinforce British rather than specifically English, Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish national identity.

Of course, the place of specific sports, teams and events in this process of identity construction, as well as the attitudes of various social groups in UK society towards the relationship between sport and Englishness, has so far been considered

in a range of publications. For instance, recent examples include Gibbons' (2014) investigation into the relationship between English national identity and football fandom, Malcolm's (2012) examination of discourses of Englishness within cricket, and Whigham's (2014) exploration of the anti-English sentiments of Scottish sports fans. But such research is dispersed across varied publishing outlets, disciplines (politics, sociology, history) and subject areas (sports, nationalism and racial and ethnic studies), and by collating contemporary scholarship exploring the complex relationship between sport and English national identity the text enables us to draw some broader conclusions than have hitherto been possible. Drawing upon empirical case studies based on original research, the aim is to consolidate the expanding academic research and scholarship. In so doing, we combine analyses which focus on the role of nationalism in the lives of (elite) sports participants with those who are largely confined to the stands or experience sporting nationalism through various forms of mass media. As a result, *Sport and English National Identity in a 'Disunited Kingdom'* reveals the complexities and contradictions of the phenomenon, and so provides a seminal statement on sport and Englishness in the early twenty-first century.

To facilitate this process we aim to provide a review of the theoretical underpinnings of the studies provided in the rest of the book. First we briefly explore some of the theoretical paradigms prominent in the study of nationalism. Second, we explain the contested nature of contemporary Englishness in more detail. We end this introduction by providing a brief outline of the subsequent contributions.

Theories of Nationalism

The “traditional-modern” debate has dominated literature on nationalism (James 2006). Smith (1998) suggests that, within this dualism, there are many theories that explain how nations and their nationalisms have developed. Although it is not possible within the confines of this introductory chapter to discuss all of these multiple variations, the most prominent perspectives are briefly outlined here.

In sociological terms, a nation is a community of history and culture which possesses a delineated territory, whilst a state has a unified economy with common legal rights and duties for its members (Smith 2010). The distinction between ethnic and civic nationalisms stems from this, with the former centrally relating to ideas of the nation, and the latter to ideas about the state (Hall, 1992; Smith, 1996). Yet the two are easily confused, particularly within the UK, primarily because England (the nation) has historically been regarded as synonymous with Britain (the state) (Colley, 1996; Kumar, 2003). Essentially, nationalists operating within modern nation-states have aimed to put the roof of statehood over the nation (or multiple nations in the case of the UK) some of whom have pointed to the “invention of traditions” that are symbolic of the cultural and often ethnic history of the nation. For example, Celtic ethnicity may be used to underpin the nationalism of the Republic of Ireland state.

The modernist paradigm of nationalism contends that nation-states, nationalisms, and feelings of national identity amongst contemporary Europeans, need to be viewed as completely modern in that they have been developed since what is known as the Age of Enlightenment (circa 1650 onwards). Of particular importance were the consequent modernising revolutions beginning in the mid-late seventeenth century: the French Revolution (1789-1799); the American Revolution (1775-1783); England’s “Glorious Revolution” (1688-89); and the subsequent British Industrial Revolution (mid 1700s). Modernists contend that nation-states and nationalism

emerged through the modernisation of western society and state politics of the elite classes, and are therefore *not* deeply rooted in history. In many ways this has become the hegemonic paradigm in the field, heavily influenced by scholars like Ernest Gellner (1983) and Elie Kedourie (1960).

Smith (1996) describes how most (but not all) modern nation-states are simultaneously and necessarily civic and ethnic. He observes that it is often assumed, by left oriented theorists in particular, that ethnic sentiments of collective belonging that enter into the life of a state inevitably breed exclusiveness and intolerance and therefore lead to conflict. Marxist theorists tend to claim that states are modern capitalist inventions that seek to divide workers of different nations and disguise their common interests (Smith 1996; 1998; 2010). Hobsbawm (1983:1) posits a Marxist interpretation of the production of nationalism as a political ideology, interpreting the practices associated with modern nation-states as “invented traditions”, in other words;

set[s] of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.

In later work, Hobsbawm (1990) proposed that the ruling political elites who had power throughout the industrial and modernising periods created or invented certain national symbols (e.g. flags and anthems) to represent particular nation-states and create identity.

Similarly stemming from Marxist principles, Anderson (1991) sought to emphasise the cultural aspects of producing modern feelings of national belonging or sentiment which to some extent Hobsbawm left aside. Instead of nations and their

nationalisms being invented they are, according to Anderson, actually imagined. Consequently nations are modern cultural artefacts and not ideological. Anderson (1991: 5) states that it 'would, I think, make things easier if one treated it [nationalism] as if it belonged with "kinship" and "religion", rather than with "liberalism" or "fascism".' He further defines the modern nation-state as being 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (Anderson 1991: 6). The nation is imagined because citizens, though they will rarely meet or know of the majority of other people existing within their nation, imagine similarities between themselves and the wider community existing within the (relatively) *fixed* boundaries of their (relatively) *autonomous* country.

Billig (1995) helps us further understand how what Hobsbawm termed invented traditions are used to maintain the imagined national community. Billig conceives of national identity as constructed through the nation being "flagged-up" in many areas of everyday life, including sport. Billig recognises that representations in the national media and other cultural spheres, although not overt, still act to "flag the nation" on a subtle but routine basis. He argues that it is by continual reference to national symbols (such as flags or anthems), and aspects of a nation's history (such as successes in wars), that what he terms "banal nationalism" occurs. In this regard, Billig (1995: 93) contends that '[small] words, rather than grand memorable phrases, offer constant, but barely conscious, reminders of the homeland, making "our" national identity unforgettable.'

Traditionalism provides an opposing paradigm to modernism. Taking this perspective, Geertz (1994) notes how new (i.e. post-colonial) societies have created a shared sense of collective belonging through six essentially ethnic elements: assumed blood ties; race; language; region; religion; and custom. These are what he

calls “primordial ties”. Primordialists attempt to understand nations and nationalisms from more physical notions of the nation as territory. Primordialists take the view that ethnic ties, often from the ancient past, explain that nationalism has been apparent for as long as people have existed. Similarly, perennialists, derive modern nations from fundamental ethnic ties rather than from the modernisation processes (Smith 2010). Perennialists locate myths that relate to the ethnic majority in a society and may often be formalised through civic commemoration in order to make certain citizens feel more tightly bonded.

A further traditional approach to nationalism, as outlined by Smith (1981), is ethno-symbolism. As its name suggests, this model aims to unearth the ways in which symbols of ethnic history, including myths and traditions, are re-used by modern nationalist ideologies. Nationalist groups have used these as propaganda to gain power through public appeal. For example, Hitler used the reverse Swastika symbol (originally imported from Asian cultures where it was often depicted on Buddha as a symbol of prosperity and good fortune) to turn those who he felt fitted into the dominant ethnic category of “Aryan” against the less powerful German Jews (cf. Elias 1996).

Hutchinson (1987) states that cultural nationalists in particular have an elusive ethnic agenda that endeavours to incorporate ethnic traditions into the modern world and unite traditionalists and modernists through the use of ethnic symbols, values and morals. Many examples of this have been evident in Northern Ireland, a nation that has traditionally been, and to an extent remains, politically and religiously divided. This politico-religious divide means that the Protestant majority have traditionally been “Unionist” or “Loyalist” and as such have had strong affiliations to the British State, whereas the Catholic minority have traditionally been “Nationalist” or “Republican” and defied British rule and the 1921 division of Ireland (Davey 2001). Moreover, Bryson

and McCartney (1994) highlight how members of these competing groups have used flags, emblems and songs that relate to their ethnic past, particularly in terms of religion, to demonstrate their allegiances. For example, in Northern Ireland the British Union flag has often been used by both Loyalists and Unionists. In opposition, Nationalists have often used the Irish Tricolour flag and maintain Catholic religious values in connection with the Irish Republic.

Finally, there are post-modernist approaches which focus upon how the modernist paradigm needs to be adapted or extended to include more recent themes, including: post-colonial perspectives; feminist critiques; and, the impact of globalisation processes on national cultures (Smith 1998; 2010). Whilst space restricts a full outline of all of the multiple variations of these approaches, the latter theme of globalisation is perhaps most significant as it underpins an understanding of what has led to post-modern conceptualisations of nations and nationalisms.

On the topic of globalisation, Schlesinger (1994: 318) states that, 'the old model of national sovereignty will not do, given the reality of global interdependence'. Drawing upon the observations of Roland Robertson (1995), Maguire (1999: 3) argues that globalisation is best understood as being comprised of:

long-term processes that have occurred unevenly across all areas of the planet. These processes—involving an increasing intensification of global interconnectedness—appear to be gathering momentum and despite their 'unevenness', it is more difficult to understand local or national experiences without reference to these global flows. Every aspect of social reality—people's living conditions, beliefs, knowledge and actions—is intertwined with unfolding globalisation processes. These processes include the emergence of a global

economy, a transnational cosmopolitan culture and a range of international social movements.

Although multinational production, migration, mass travel and mass communications have themselves developed over protracted periods, all of these processes appear to have gathered momentum since the 1960s due in part to technological advances. Many argue that the creation of what Albrow (1996) termed “World Society” problematizes the territorial boundaries that were created in the nineteenth century to distinguish the “national” from the “foreign” and may even have replaced the primary objective of ‘state-led modernization’ until the late twentieth century, namely ‘the desire to defend and expand the nation’s influence in a world of competing states’ (Kennedy 2010: 2).

Inglis and Thorpe (2012: 261) state that globalisation has *economic*, *political*, *social* and *cultural* dimensions and there is now a plethora of theories which address each of these four broad areas. Again it is not within the scope of the current chapter to discuss all of the multiple ways in which theorists have debated how global processes impact upon traditional ways of theorising the nation, and indeed this has been done in much greater detail by a number of sociologists elsewhere (cf. Inglis and Thorpe 2012: 258–281). But drawing upon Robertson’s (1992; 1995) original theoretical contributions to understanding cultural globalisation, Giulianotti and Robertson (2009:38) explain that the ‘homogenisation-heterogenisation debate’ is the ‘axial problem in the sociology of globalization’, in that:

Homogenization arguments generally posit that globalization is marked by growing cultural convergence at the transnational level. Conversely,

heterogenization arguments contend that global processes maintain or facilitate cultural diversity or divergence.

From the homogenisation perspective, globalisation is viewed as a kind of mono-culture using neo-Marxist terms such as “Westernisation”, “Americanisation”, “globalisation” or “cultural imperialism” (cf. Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009: 38-39). Proponents of this view regard globalisation as a one-way process whereby dominant national cultures, and/or transnational corporations (TNCs) usually emanating from “core” states, have effectively forced less powerful “peripheral” states to reproduce their products or practices sometimes at the expense of their own national traditions (cf. Wallerstein 1974).

Alternatively, from the heterogenisation perspective, globalisation is viewed as providing opportunities for interaction between different cultures throughout the world, leading to the creation of “new” or “hybrid” products, practices or even identities. For example, in relation to the global migration of individuals which has led to the “hybridisation” or “creolisation” of cultural identities within many nation-states, Bhabha (1990 cited in Smith 1998: 203) states that the,

great influx of ex-colonials, immigrants ... and asylum seekers has eroded the bases of traditional narratives and images of a homogenous national identity, revealing their fragmented and hybrid character. Today, every collective cultural identity has become plural.

The broad study of globalisation includes debates regarding contemporary European integration or “Europeanisation”. The goal of uniting European nations (politically,

economically, socially and/or culturally) has grown significantly with broader globalisation processes and Europe has expanded via various agreements and treaties between increasing numbers of “European” nation-state governments (cf. Chryssochoou 2001; Guibernau 2011; Roche 2010). At the time of writing, the number of individual member states within the European Union is 28 (not including five candidate countries and a further three potential candidates), with 17 member states sharing a common currency in the “Euro” (Europa, 2016). The position of the UK is unclear with a referendum mandating a British Exit, or so-called Brexit, but the government is yet to invoke Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty which formally triggers the process of political and organizational withdrawal. These processes are deeply intertwined with the “English Question”.

The ‘English question’

Evidence of renewed interest in the topic of contemporary English national identity can be found in the large (and increasing) number of books that have been published on the subject since the mid-1990s. The most prominent of these, perhaps, is *The English: A Portrait of a People* written by the BBC journalist Jeremy Paxman (1998). This title sold over 300,000 copies in just two years (Bryant 2006), reflecting a broader social movement stimulated by a desire to understand what specifically constitutes contemporary Englishness and/or an English national identity. A myriad of studies of notions of “Englishness” or “the English” have used a combination of historical evidence and sociological, political and cultural theories of nationalism to attempt to show, in a multitude of different ways, how the English have come to define themselves (for a more detailed discussion see Gibbons 2014).

The reason for the interest in this topic is that English national identity has, since the middle of the twentieth century, been increasingly called into question through the culmination of a number of social developments. According to Delanty (2006: 357), two key aspects of the present stage of human societal developments are,

an apparent rise in nationalism and, on the other side, the increasing impact of global forces Globalization can be seen as creating the conditions for new nationalisms, which arise as defensive responses to global forces, or it can be seen as a response by powerful nations to the nationalism of the periphery.

These global trends have had a specific, local, manifestation for the English, highlighting its historical conflation with Britishness (Colley 1996; Curtice 2009; McCrone 2002; 2006) and its imperial peculiarity (Kumar 2000; 2001; 2003; 2006a; 2006b).

As the terms “Britain” and “UK” are used throughout this book it is important to briefly clarify their differences. Great “Britain” is actually formed of the kingdoms of England and Scotland and the Principality of Wales, whereas the “UK” is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Groom 2006: xv). These terms should not be confused with the term “British Isles”, which includes the Republic of Ireland and the Crown Dependencies (Isle of Man and the Channel Islands). The modern British state dates back to 1707 and the Treaty of Union between England and Scotland (Bryant 2006: 23); although there had already been a version of the British Union flag flown a century before that in 1606 and there are over one thousand years of Union Jack prehistory (Groom 2006: xiii-iv). The Union Jack was conceived on the banners of the ancient Britons and in heraldry according to Groom. Yet, the

contemporary Union Jack is made up of the crosses of St George, St Andrew and St Patrick, respectively the patron saints of England, Scotland and Ireland, and it was first flown on 1 January 1801, when the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland came into existence (Groom 2006: xiii).

Although many historians note that there has been an ‘England’ and an ‘English’ since at least 937 (Colls 2002: 380), contemporary iterations of English national identity became a topic of intense political and cultural debate prior to and following the election of a “New” Labour government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 1997 (Bond, Jeffrey and Rosie, 2010; Willett and Giovannini, 2014). The government quickly introduced constitutional reforms primarily involving limited and varying degrees of political devolution being granted to Northern Ireland following the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, and to Scotland and Wales in 1999 following referendums. The level of devolution granted to these nations, in contrast to that devolved to England as a whole or to regions within its borders (O’Neill 2004), meant that a large question mark was drawn over whether the English could claim to have a politically defined “nationalism” at all. Regional identity was claimed to be so strong in north-east England that it had the potential to lead to an elected regional assembly with partially devolved political powers, but this was emphatically rejected in a 2004 referendum, with almost 80% of the north-east public voting against the idea (Sandford 2006; Willett and Giovannini 2014). While a referendum has frequently been mooted for Cornwall and a Cornish nationalist party exists, both lack the level of popular support seen in Scotland and Wales (Payton 2004; Sandford 2006). It seems then that the majority of the mainstream English population (even amongst Conservatives) see no requirement for, or perceived benefits to, devolved governments for the English regions or even an English national government. O’Neill

(2004) suggests that this is largely due to fears over the further fragmentation of Britain as well as resistance to having an additional tier of government bureaucracy. But the consequence is that it is harder for the English to establish or even claim anything like the level of autonomous political national power that Scotland and Wales now have (McCrone 2002; 2006).

Expansion of the European Union has meant that many citizens of territories that claim to be “submerged” within nation-states now feel the need to reassert their distinctive “national” identities in order to remain visible (Delanty 2006; Guibernau 2011). Scotland is an example of one of these submerged nations. Although allied with England to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain as a result of the 1707 Act of Union (Colls 2002; Kumar 2003), (post-devolution) Scots (and not only Scottish Nationalists) often prefer to assert a specifically Scottish (rather than British) identity in interactions with other Europeans (Grundy and Jamieson 2007). The level of devolved political power gained by Scotland, and to a lesser extent Wales (Northern Ireland being more complicated), was arguably the result of the desire of nationalists, represented in particular by the Scottish National Party (SNP) and Plaid Cymru, to be recognised as sovereign European nations. Inevitably this marked a new level of distinction from the traditionally more powerful “oppressors” within the UK, i.e. England. As a further development in the devolution process of the late 1990s, a referendum on Scottish independence from the UK on 18 September 2014 only narrowly resulted in Scotland remaining part of the UK, with 45% of Scottish voters in favour of independence.

Regardless of devolution and European integration, one must remember that “British” has always been a multifaceted concept. According to Bryant (2006: 24), British

has always been a composite identity and it has long proved possible to extend it to cover citizens of other origins, from refugees in Victorian times to...immigrants from the former Empire in the 1950s and 1960s. What one has in Britain is a civic nation that has proved capable of accommodating a large amount of difference.

The declining significance of the British (overseas) Empire presents another major challenge to contemporary Englishness. At its height in 1921 the British Empire incorporated almost a quarter of the world's population. The beginning of the end was signalled when Ireland gained de facto independence for its 26 southern counties, formally becoming the Irish Free State in 1922. This was followed in 1947 by the loss of the "Jewel in the Crown" (India) and the majority of the African nations throughout the 1960s (Hobsbawm 1995). The presence of British rule overseas came to a highly symbolic end in 1997 with the return of Hong-Kong to the People's Republic of China (PRC). It should be noted Britain does still hold degrees of sovereignty over three Crown Dependencies, including: Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man, as well as over some fourteen Overseas Territories including: Anguilla; Bermuda; British Antarctic Territory; British Indian Ocean Territory; British Virgin Islands; Cayman Islands; Falklands Islands; Gibraltar; Montserrat; Pitcairn Islands; Saint Helena (including Ascension, Tristan da Cunha); South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands; Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia; and, Turks and Caicos Islands. Former British Colonies now form part of a voluntary association of 53 independent sovereign states known as the Commonwealth of Nations (Mozambique is the only nation within the Commonwealth that was not a former British Colony), but

Britain's (and therefore England's) overseas influence is dramatically reduced from 100 years ago.

With the decline of the British Empire came an increase in immigration, particularly post-1945. However this immigration is unevenly spread across the UK, with 2001 UK census data indicating that all nine regions of England except the north-east have higher proportions of those born abroad than Scotland and Wales (BBC 2009; Northern Ireland figures were not included). Immigration therefore presents a more immediate and overt issue in England than in Scotland or Wales. A response to increasing immigration has been movements to (re)invent and (re)assert a specifically English identity. These have often been related to issues of "race" and ethnicity associated with Britain's far right organisations such as the BNP (British National Party), National Front and most recently the EDL (English Defence League) who champion racist politics and an ethnically exclusive "white" Englishness (see Trilling 2012 on the rise of Britain's far right). The rise of the UK Independence Party, the campaigning of which was significant in forcing the Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron to seek a referendum on EU membership, is indicative of these trends, although peculiarly contoured by anti-European sentiment and the legacy of English-British conflation.

But whereas Britain no longer offers much emotional gratification for the Scottish and Welsh, many "white" English people (particularly older generations) cannot disassociate themselves from a Britishness that has become synonymous with Englishness. Bryant rightly notes that disassociation from Britain is also problematic for large parts of the immigrant population who are more likely to use the term "British" than "English" to define their identity. Although, Bryant fails to fully recognise the heterogeneity of these communities (including Black-British, British-Muslim and

British-Asian), their existence across Britain rather than England, and the more complex diasporic identities of younger generations (cf. Burdsey, 2006), the general point stands. Moreover, Bryant (2006) also notes that there are more British families who are a mixture of English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish descent in England than elsewhere in the UK, who also have a reason to think of themselves as just as British as anyone else. Disassociation is also particularly difficult for Ulster Unionists who have to identify with Britain, even if, in contradistinction to the Catholic Irish south, it is a Protestant Britain of the past.

Curtice (2009: 5), citing evidence from *British Social Attitudes Surveys*, notes that the proportion of people in England stating that they are 'English, not British' has been consistently higher since 1999, 'suggesting that a sense of Englishness did awaken in some people in the immediate wake of the creation of devolved institutions in Scotland and Wales.' However, feelings of Britishness and support for the Union have *not* completely disappeared alongside this apparent rise in Englishness and the evidence suggests that the initial upsurge 'has not been sustained' (Curtice 2009: 19). Curtice (2009: 7) further notes that the proportion of English respondents who stated that they are 'very proud' of their region has remained at 25% since 2001 and there is, therefore, 'little evidence of an increase in attachment to the English regions since Scottish and Welsh devolution has been in place.'

However, in the summer of 2011 the Institute for Public Policy Research conducted the first *Future of England* (FoE) survey which they claim was 'one of the most comprehensive examinations of English attitudes to questions of identity, nationhood and governance to date' (Wyn Jones et al. 2012: 2). Among other aspects, the findings indicated that,

there is evidence to suggest that we are witnessing the emergence in recent decades of a different kind of Anglo-British identity, in which the English component is increasingly considered the primary source of attachment ... [there is also] strong evidence that English identity is becoming politicised: that is, the more strongly English a person feels the more likely they are to believe that the current structure of the post-devolution UK is unfair and the more likely they are to support the development of an English dimension to the governance of England (Wyn Jones et al. 2012: 3).

This initial FoE survey was followed up with a second survey conducted in November 2012 (Wyn Jones et al. 2013). Part of the reason for the second survey was that 'summer 2012 saw Britishness well and truly to the fore during both the Queen's diamond jubilee celebrations and the London Olympic and Paralympic Games' (Wyn Jones et al. 2013). The second study essentially reiterated these trends. Demonstrating a persistence of feelings of English discontent regarding the nation's position within the post-devolution UK, the 2012 survey findings also showed that this was 'closely linked with hostility towards England's other union, the EU. Among the English, devo-anxiety and Euroscepticism are two sides of the same coin' (Wyn Jones et al. 2013: 32).

Such findings are a response to the many unintended social dynamics that have altered Anglo-British citizens' social reality from the end of World War II to the present day – namely European integration, decline of Empire (and immigration associated with each) and devolution. *Sport and English National Identity in a 'Disunited Kingdom'* is an attempt to provide a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the

manifestations of these socio-political developments across the spectrum of the most socially significant sports.

In organising the analysis of these phenomena, *Sport and English National Identity in a 'Disunited Kingdom'* is divided into three parts. Part one "British or English?" contains five chapters each addressing key debates regarding English national identity and its synonymy with Britishness throughout history within specific sporting contexts, namely: cricket; association football; tennis; cycling and rugby. Part Two, "Contested identities and sport in England" is comprised of a further four chapters exploring the relationship between sport and competing layers of identity that divide the English, including: ethnicity; gender; disability; and, religion. Part Three "Attitudes to England from the 'Celtic fringe' via sport" is made up of three more chapters, each addressing perceptions of and attitudes towards the English (in relation to sport) from those within the other nations within the UK: Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In the concluding chapter, we draw on some key political and sporting events that coincided with the completion of this book manuscript, especially the referendum vote for the UK to leave the EU, and the Rio Olympic Games of 2016. We also provide some further theoretical and empirical reflections on how this collection, as a whole, enhances our understanding of English national identity and intra-British relations. In light of the diverse contributions in this book, we end our conclusion by considering the question: is Englishness a sporting identity in crisis?

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